



ITON TZIYON

עיתון ציון

Mount Zion Temple Bulletin - Purim Edition

Spring | March - April 2023 | Adar - Iyar 5783

Vol. 167, No. 3

Imagining Mount Zion's Future

Kivvun La'Atid: Mount Zion 2040

Prepared by artificial intelligence bot, ChatGPT.* By 2040, Mount Zion will:

- Convert Bloom Library into a virtual reality playground.
- Our cantors will record an album of Debbie Friedman's lost reggaeton compositions and take it on the road.
- Our rabbis will dedicate Rashi study time to the writings of early-20th-century Catholic thought-leader Archbishop John Ireland.

If you have other predictions or desires, attend a
"Future Fair and Town Hall Gathering"
either on March 14 or 19.

Whether you've been a member for 7
weeks or 70 years, we want YOUR input on
OUR future.

See page 15.

**Not exactly from Artificial Intelligence.
What ChatGPT actually said:*

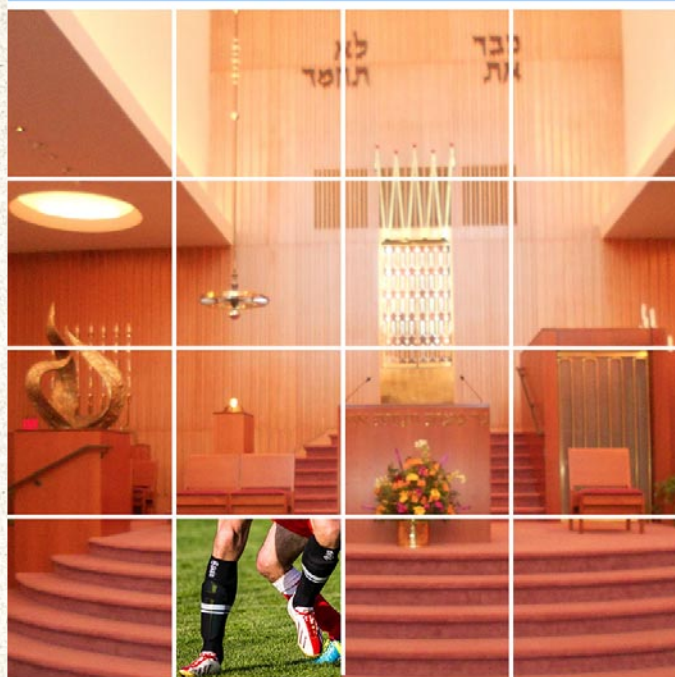
I'm sorry, but as an AI language model, I do not have the ability to predict the future. The future of Mount Zion Temple Synagogue or any other organization is dependent on a variety of factors such as social, economic, and political trends, as well as the actions and decisions made by the leaders and members of the organization. Without more specific information, it would be impossible to accurately predict what the temple might look like in 2040.

To prove you're human, please complete this CAPTCHA by finding all the "Shins" to get to Purim on page 6.

Select all squares with

Shins / ש

If there are none, click skip



SKIP

L'Dor VaDor

From Generation to Generation

Mazel Tov To...

Michael Kuhne and Mandy Roll-Kuhne on the marriage of their daughter, *Hannah Kuhne* to *Joe Kelzenberg* on February 4.

David Lipset on the birth of his grandson, *Claude*, on January 5. *Claude* is the son of *Mike Lipset* and *Gaelle Janiver*.

Dan and Tanya Paley on the marriage of their daughter, *Sophia Paley* to *Hadhy Ayaz* on December 10.

Michelle and Gary Pulford on the marriage of their child *Marni Pulford* to *Logan Stoehr* on February 5.

Dan Rybeck and Kate Searls on the birth of their grandson, *Amir Chase Searls*, on December 8

"The giving of Torah happened at one specific time, but the receiving of Torah happens all the time, in every generation." - Meir Alter, the Gerer Rebbe

We welcome **Danielle "Dani" Walden** who has completed our conversion program recently and has thus chosen Judaism: **May she go from strength to strength!**

ZICHRONAM LIVRACHA...

May their memories be a blessing

We note with sorrow the passing of our members:

Fred Amram

Our condolences to his family, including his wife, *Sandra Brick* and daughter, *Sue (Jeff) Summit*.

Steven Feiges

Our condolences to her family, including his former wife, *Jennifer Feiges* and son, *Louis Feiges*.

Mildred "Millie" Lapidos

Our condolences to her family.

Hannalee "Honey" Zelle

Our condolences to her family, including her sons, *Danny (Laura) Zelle* and *Peter (Jessica Leiman) Zelle*.

We Extend Condolences to...

David (Karen) Ellis on the death of his father, *Ronald Ellis*, and husband of former member *Betty Ellis*, on November 22.

David Geddes (Sheila Stanton) on the death of his father, *Robert Geddes*, on February 13.

Joan (Jason) Kinsley on the death of her mother, *Susan Slotnick*, on January 17.

Joseph (Lisa Taran-Maddy) Maddy on the death of his brother, *Tim Maddy*, on January 23.

Joan (Richard) Newmark on the death of her brother, *Allen Friedman*, January 26.

Stefan Plambeck (Sharon Arad) on the death of his father, *Loren Plambeck*, on January 7.

Cathy (Larry) Sernick on the death of her mother, *Mary Ezzo*, on December 23.

Les (Karen) Suzukamo on the death of his father, *Ted "Tetsuo" Suzukamo*, on December 22.

Letter from the Rabbi

Purim, Pesach, and Planning



Cantor Strauss-Klein begins her column this month sharing a phrase all students at Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion remember well from the final months of our first year of studies in Jerusalem: "Purim, Pesach (Passover), and Planning." After the holidays, we rabbis, cantors, and educators got ready to return to the US.

I want to update this phrase for Mount Zion in 2023 to be "Purim, Pesach, and Planning." Time moves quickly, and we are living in both Jewish time and future time.

Over the past fifteen months, a group of congregants, clergy, and staff have been studying trends and factors that affect us as a congregation and how these may help us articulate our purpose better as we imagine Mount Zion in the year 2040. We have called this process: Kivvun La'Atid (literally, a direction for the future.)

Many of the meetings, open to the congregation, had over 60 people attending! This is a remarkable testament to the feeling of belonging so many have in our congregation, not to mention the commitment to strengthening our community.

The planning process is now at the exciting stage of sharing a draft of inspiring language to guide us in the decades ahead with specific strategic directions for the next 3-5 years. This plan emerged from analysis of our official congregational surveys in 2017 and 2020 along with many in-depth exercises by the Kivvun La'Atid Task Force to capture our best creative thinking through this process.

We have spent so much time on the language of the draft statement because words matter.

Amos Oz wrote, "Words create conceptions and self-conceptions and ultimately nations. They can start and stop wars. They can wound and heal. Choosing words carefully is a moral responsibility."

We look forward to sharing our insights from the past fifteen months and hearing your reflections on either Tuesday, March 14 or Sunday, March 19 (or both!). See page 15 for details. We will share the statement to everyone in the congregation after March 19.

I personally am so grateful for the extraordinary investment of time by the leaders of Kivvun La'Atid. I will be thanking them at our Annual Meeting in May. For now, they should know that their efforts will lead to a better future for us and, we pray, for our broader community and for generations to come.

And despite the phrase that began this column, the order of our weeks ahead is actually "Purim, Planning, and Pesach" (and then more planning!)

May our celebrations and our efforts be for a blessing.

Adam Stock Spilker, Rabbi

Yesher koach to the B'nei Mitzvah Class of 2021-22

In honor of their becoming B'nei Mitzvah, families contributed to a fund instead of giving individual gifts to classmates. They raised \$3,482; half of this will be saved for them to give as their Confirmation Class gift in 10th grade. The other half (\$1,741) will be distributed to the organizations the students chose in 7th grade, **JDC (Joint Distribution Committee)** for supporting Ukrainian Refugees, and **Keshet - For LGBTQ Equality in Jewish Life**. Well done/kol hakavod!



Make Shabbat Your Sanctuary

Join for Engaging, Musical, Inspiring Shabbat Services

Same time every week.

Friday Night

Kabbalat Shabbat Service: 6:30 pm – Join in person or online ([Zoom](#); [Livestream](#); [Facebook](#))

Saturday Morning

Torah Study: 9:00 am - In person or online via [Zoom](#)

Shabbat Shacharit (Morning) Service: 10:00 am – In person or online

(Online options for Saturday morning: with B'nei Mitzvah: [Livestream](#) or [Facebook](#); without B'nei Mitzvah: [Zoom](#)).

Tot Shabbat: 10:30 am - In person (second Saturday of every month) *Designed for families with children from birth through 6 years old.*

Shabbat for the Soul

Fridays, 6:30 pm on February 24, April 21, May 19
Live from Margolis Hall (live streamed and on zoom)

We move from the formality of the sanctuary to our social hall to create a more intimate service. Our singing is accompanied by violin, guitar, keyboard, and percussion. **The evocative music opens our hearts and awakens our spirits.**



Shabbat is always for the soul, but there is a particularly soulful atmosphere at “Shabbat for the Soul” services. It is a more contemplative worship style with the congregation sitting in the round. We use a single page handout for the prayers. A slower pace enables us to focus on the meditative effect of the music, the potential for deeper awareness and prayer, and the feeling of community.

Daily Services - on Zoom!

All welcome!

Monday through Thursday at 5:45 pm Sunday at 9:30 am

New: If you would like to attend in person, we can arrange a service in the Chapel with a week's notice. Please contact the office.

The tradition of Daily Services at Mount Zion goes back to the 1950s and has been uninterrupted ever since. Since the pandemic began, a rotation of lay leaders and Rabbis Adler and Spilker lead the brief and meaningful connection. You are welcome to join once or more! An important mitzvah is to participate on the day of a loved one's yahrzeit.

Monday through Thursday: [Join via Zoom](#) or call 929-205-6099 and then enter the meeting ID 727 277 057.

Sundays: [Join via Zoom](#) or meeting ID 545 289 167.

First Friday Family Shabbat Dinner

Food, Friends, Family: Shabbat!

Fridays, March 3 and April 7

- Meet and Greet at 5:15 pm
- Blessings and Dinner at 5:30 pm
- Services at 6:30 pm

\$18 for a household; \$9 for an individual

Register at [mzion.org](#) by February 27 for the March 3 dinner and by April 3 for April 7 dinner.



Passover Services

1st Day Festival Service

Thursday, April 6, 10:00 am

7th Day Festival Service

(includes Yizkor prayers)

Wednesday, April 12, 10:00 am

More on p. 9.



Purim, Pesach, and packing! Back when I was a first-year cantorial student at HUC-JIR in Jerusalem, “Purim, Pesach, and packing” was the mantra of the spring semester; the goal, I suppose, to alert us to the fact that time was moving quickly, and before we knew it, our year in Israel would be over and we’d be headed back to the States. Aside from generally being a fan of alliteration, I hadn’t much

thought about the connection between Purim and Passover. I wouldn’t have said they had much, if anything, in common aside from the old adage “they tried to kill us, we survived, let’s eat.”

For many Jews, Passover is the most spiritually significant holiday, not to be placed on the same level as Purim, a minor festival that came about relatively late in our history. Indeed, indeed, Purim is not a “yom tov” on the level of the High Holy Days, or the Pilgrimage Festivals (Sukkot, Shavuot, and Passover). But—and this was a surprise to me—a midrash says that in the messianic age, we will still observe Purim, but not the Festivals. Imagine that: no Passover seder, but we’ll still be celebrating Purim, a holiday of carnivals, cookies, and costumes (to continue the alliteration fun). Apparently our sages felt that some message in Purim was more important, more significant even than the values associated with Passover.

Rabbi Steven Schwartz, a congregational rabbi in Baltimore, says that message is in the oft-noted fact that God’s name does not appear in the Megillah. Pick up the Haggadah, or read the story of Exodus directly from the Torah, and you will find God referred to over and over again. God is on virtually every page of the Haggadah, but not a single verse of the Megillah. Rabbi Schwartz says that this is because the focus in Passover is on what God did for us, and the focus in Purim is what we do for ourselves—Purim’s message being that salvation ultimately comes about through our own action and not God’s miracles. If God is a “snowplow” parent in Exodus, then the (absent) God of the book of Esther can represent the growing independence of the Jewish people. Likewise, if the role of human agency is minimized in the Haggadah (Moses’s name doesn’t even appear in the traditional Haggadah text), then it is maximized in the story of Esther. The moral of the story: if you want to heal the world, you can’t leave it up to God. Or as a plaque in my house says, “Pray to God, but row towards shore.”

But while I appreciate the message of human agency that’s highlighted in the Megillah, I think that God’s absence in that story has more to teach us than the difference we can make in the world through our own efforts, or that we shouldn’t rely on divine miracles to solve our problems. The “hidden God” of Purim, known in our tradition as “*hester Panim*,” intrigues me. What does it mean when God appears to be “hiding”? What is the message for us? David Whyte, a poet and author has an essay on the word “Hiding” in his book *Consolations: The Solace, Nourishment and Underlying Meaning of Ordinary Words*, in which he writes: “We live in a time of the dissected soul, the immediate disclosure: our thoughts, imaginings and longings exposed to the light too much, too early and too often; our best qualities squeezed too soon into a world already awash with ideas that oppress our sense of self and our sense of others. **What is real is almost always, to begin with, hidden, and does not want to be understood with the part of our mind that mistakenly thinks it knows what is happening.** What is precious inside us does not care to be known by the mind in ways that diminish its presence.”

I recognize and regularly experience the comfort that a manifest God, the God of Exodus, can bring. But I also don’t want to believe in a God that I fully understand, that is “obvious,” or limited by language or my own ability to conceive of God. The Book of Esther invites us to reflect on the value of sitting with what we don’t know, and becoming comfortable with the not-immediately-apparent or easily understood. Both Esther and Moses spend time in concealment: Esther in the palace harem, Moses as a baby hidden by his mother from Pharaoh. The Hebrew words in each story, *seter* and *tzafun*, connote “hiding place,” “secret,” “shelter,” “store up,” “treasure.” As we encounter the immanent God of Exodus and the hidden God of Esther, I invite you to reflect upon the significance of hiddenness in your own life. David Whyte writes: “our first feeling of meeting something that is closed off to us might actually be an encounter with something enclosed and yet alive, and by the very nature of that aliveness, something that will open and grow and give its nourishment into a waiting world.” What treasures, what shelter might you find in the secret places within?

Jennifer Strauss-Klein, Cantor

Pop-up Choir!

All are welcome to join 30 minutes before the start of **second Friday Shabbat services each month through April** to learn both new and familiar settings of our Shabbat prayers, featuring the compositions of some of today’s most talented Jewish musicians. Please join us for one, some, or all Shabbatot—we want to hear everyone’s voices! No experience or music-reading abilities needed, and prayer texts will be provided!



Trope Troupe

... the more Torah, the more life. -Hillel

Todah Rabah to our Nov-Jan Ba’alei Korei (chanting Torah): Michael Chauss, Emme Goldhardt, Siana Goodwin, Abbey Kanzer, Steve Levin, Rick Linsk, John Mast, Dani Salus, Kent Simon, Bea Tortorello, Herman Westreich

Todah Rabah to our Nov-Jan Haftarah chanters: Sue Benfield, Siana Goodwin

To sign up to chant Torah or Haftarah on Shabbat, e-mail Cantor Jennifer Strauss-Klein at jstraussklein@mzion.org.

From the President

“For the strength of the Pack is the Wolf, and the strength of the Wolf is the Pack.” – Rudyard Kipling

(While I struggled with using a quote from a purported antisemite, I thought that there might not be a better use than in the President's column at an American synagogue.)



Rabbi Adler wrote of belonging-in the December 2022 Bulletin- “Now we are taking it a step further. We not only want you to feel welcome, but to feel you belong. Welcome is a beginning and comes from the outside. Belonging is built upon the foundation of welcome. Welcome invites you in, belonging makes you want to stay.” On the cover of that same Bulletin was, “MZ B’Yachad, MZ Together.” From where

do the feeling of belonging and togetherness come? From being physically and mentally together, and feeling a connection to both the people and the activity. I wanted to use this column as a reminder of just some of the reasons and opportunities to come together:

- Commonality: age; hobbies; likes and dislikes- as in other areas of our lives, groupings happen formally and informally as outgrowths of overlaps in their lives. Just look at the Small Groups web page or how people congregate together whenever people come into the building.
- Engagement: as anyone is drawn into serving on a committee, taking on an ongoing volunteer role, or attending a series of events or meetings around a topic, they get the chance to meet and connect with those who like doing the same things or who support the same efforts.
- Worship: Mount Zion is a Reform congregation, which means that some members lay tefillin and keep kosher, and some don't believe in G-d, and yet each will find the other around them in the sanctuary, Margolis Hall, the Chapel, or online for a service.
- Friendships Circles: this is what I'm calling the ability to make friends of friends of your friends you make at Mount Zion.
- Events: if you haven't attended a First Friday Dinner, you haven't seen hundreds of members and prospective members enjoying togetherness, good food, and a warm atmosphere. There are lots of events that can generate these feelings, depending on what each person likes to do.
- Projects: there is some overlap with the lines above, but participating in projects such as baking hamantaschen, setting up the garage sale, or putting together baskets of food and supplies for Bread and Torah will bring you together with like-minded others, and make you feel good about being a member of Mount Zion.

Belonging may come, in part, as a byproduct of being welcomed, but only in part. The other part comes from the individual's desire to come together, and their willingness to explore the possible connections they have or could have with others.

Michael Wall, President

Welcome to our new members!

Tom Cytron-Hysom and Bob Boyce

Heather Faber-Lau and Rich Lau
and their children Rose and Lily

Bruce Goodman

Derek and Laurel Hood and
their children Asher and Noa

David and Ruth Olkon
and their children Yossi, Shoshana, and Zev

Laurie Robinson Perez and her children
Rachel, Benji, and Eli

Matt Rubenstein and Julia Heneghan

Update on Mount Zion's Covid-19 policies

Julie Ostrowsky, Chair, MZ Covid Task Force

After the High Holy Days, Mount Zion shifted to a mask-optional Covid-19 policy, no longer requiring the use of masks at Shabbat services, life-cycle events, or in the religious school, and food service resumed indoors. Mask-optional means that we support the use of masks to protect yourself and others, especially in higher risk settings like crowded indoor events. Covid-19 continues to pose a risk to people in our community, including those who are older, unvaccinated, or immunocompromised. As always, it is important that we respect congregants' individual choices, which includes mask choices.

You can read more about this decision in the [October 14, 2022, email to the congregation](#) (also posted on mzion.org) Other Covid precautions remain in place to protect the health and well-being of our community:

- Vaccinations: We teach the value of pikuach nefesh, saving life, and from that principle we learn that having up-to-date vaccinations, including boosters, is a mitzvah (commandment) in Judaism. (Still need a bivalent booster? [Click here.](#))
- Enhanced ventilation and air filtration continue to be a priority throughout the building when possible.
- Feeling sick? Please stay home if you're experiencing symptoms of Covid-19 ([CDC list of symptoms](#)). We ask anyone who has tested positive for Covid-19 to stay home for at least 10 days after symptom onset or date of the positive test AND be antigen-negative on a rapid test.
- Online Access: Our services and other events will continue to be accessible remotely via Zoom and/or livestreaming and Facebook.

Questions or concerns? Please email us at office@mzion.org.

PURIM at Mount Zion:

The Best Jewish Holiday for All Ages!

Purim commemorates the story of Esther, who rescued the Jews of ancient Persia (now Iran) from persecution. Traditions include dressing in costume and eating hamantaschen (triangular stuffed pastries). It is our Spring time (!) chance for some fun!



It's a Mitzvah!

Giving to the poor (*Matanot La'evyonim*) is one of the four mitzvot of Purim. Consider giving to our **March Food Drive** (see p. 8) or **Yom Ma'asim Tovim** (see p. 7).

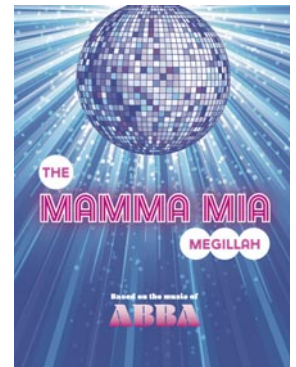
Sunday, March 5

10:00-11:00 am Mamma Mia Megillah shpiel and silly service!

Purim...Mamma mia, here we go again! Join us for our silly service and hilarious Abba-themed Purim musical shpiel, featuring our talented Chai School thespians and all your favorite ABBA hits! *Livestreaming available starting at 10:00 am.*

11:00-1:00 pm Purim Carnival - Open to everyone! Invite your friends!

Purchase wristbands for kids. Cost: \$15/one child; \$25/two children; \$35/three or more children. *This cost includes all activities but does not include food or drink, which will be cash only.*



Monday, March 6

Adult Purim Extravaganza!

Join us for a joyful Purim celebration with some annual favorites and new traditions! Costumes are encouraged! *Livestreaming available starting at 7pm.*

6:00 pm Shushan Deli - Food and drink (sandwich, chips, and hamantaschen) available for \$10! You can pay in advance at mzion.org or bring cash. We will have gluten-free, vegetarian options. If you wish, grab food and bring it to the happy hour or text study!

6:00 pm Young Adult Happy Hour (20s/30s) - Gather in Sisterhood Chapel to celebrate Purim with mocktails, cocktails, and good company!

6:30 pm Intergenerational text study with Rabbi Adler - Rabbi Adler leads a discussion on where God is in the Purim story!

7:00 pm Spirited Purim service and Megillah reading

After the service: Latke/Hamentaschen Debate: The Rematch!

Local comedians Elise Cole (who grew up at MZ) and Max Hornstein return to Mount Zion for a rematch debate on the merits of these holiday delicacies. Improv guru and MZ congregant Erica Solomon will moderate. Will the Latke or the Hamentasch reign supreme this year? Come and find out!



Elise Cole



Max Hornstein



Erica Solomon

YOM MAASIM TOVIM:

A Hands-On, All-Ages Mitzvah Day at Neighborhood House

Sunday, May 7, 9:30 am – 12:15 pm

In our vision, a core principle is *Gemilut Chasadim*: Acts of Loving Kindness.
This is a day to put our vision into action together!

Packing Meals at Neighborhood House

Everyone is invited to join us at Neighborhood House (179 Robie St., Saint Paul) to bring food to the Food Shelf, learn about Neighborhood House, and then pack 25,000 meals to be donated to **Rise Against Hunger**.

Childcare will be available from 9:30-12:15 pm at Neighborhood House.



Our goal is to raise \$20,000!

In addition to covering the cost of packing 25,000 meals, all donations will go towards Neighborhood House, Mazon, and Rise Against Hunger.

Sign up form will be available next month.

Everyone is invited to tour and learn firsthand how our funding and food donations help those supported by Neighborhood House in our community. We will then proceed to work together as a community and pack 25,000 meals to be donated to Rise Against Hunger!

•**Neighborhood House**, (neighb.org) founded by The Women of Mount Zion in 1897, mission is to help people gain the skills, knowledge, and confidence to thrive in diverse communities. Neighborhood House helps people with basic needs, education, multiple youth programs, and health and well-being. All programs are offered for free to participants.

•**Mazon** (mazon.org) a Jewish Response to Hunger is a national advocacy organization working to end hunger among people of all faiths and backgrounds in the US and Israel.

•**Rise Against Hunger** (riseagainsthunger.org) is an international hunger relief organization that distributes food and life changing aid to the world's most vulnerable, mobilizing the necessary resources to work to end hunger by 2030.

We are excited to be partnering with these amazing organizations to help locally, nationally, and globally as our Mount Zion Religious School works to help eliminate hunger and instill the importance of giving back!

We will be sharing additional details over the next few weeks on these events on May 7 and ask our kids to help raise the funds needed to support. If you would like to help volunteer for any of the planning, please reach out to Jennifer Mason at jfarber2004@yahoo.com or 651-335-4556. We will be sending out a link shortly via SignUp for volunteer opportunities.



MAZON





February 27 – April 9

In Minnesota,
1 in 12 struggle with food insecurity,
including 1 in 8 children

You Can Help.

**Your contribution will help families
 get the food they need.**

Make a gift • Donate food • Volunteer
Create your own fundraiser

Learn
 More



**Neighborhood
 House**



neighborhoodhousemn.org/march-food-drive

179 Robie Street East | St. Paul, MN 55107



Neighborhood House March Food Drive Donate or Volunteer at Kowalski's!

As part of Neighborhood House's March Food Drive, they will have a table at Kowalski's. If you are interested in supporting this initiative as a volunteer, simply complete this interest form <https://forms.office.com/r/CuuMjCFFAT> and you will receive more information (and the volunteer sign-up) when they become available.

There will be a table at the Grand Ave Kowalski's on:

- Saturday, March 18
- Sunday, March 19
- Saturday, March 25
- Sunday, March 26

Kowalski's Food Drive - Volunteer Role

Shoppers will be invited to purchase items and donate them on-site at the Neighborhood House table. Volunteers tasks will include:

- greeting customers and distribute our Food Wish List
- collecting food items at our table
- collecting financial donations
- transferring donations to the Neighborhood House van

Any questions contact Shane Springer (Volunteer Engagement Manager) at sspringer@neighborhoodhousemn.org



Yom HaShoah 2023/5783: Holocaust Remembrance Day

Tuesday, April 18, 7:00 pm at Beth Jacob

JCRC and Beth Jacob Congregation invite you to Yom HaShoah, Minnesota and the Dakotas' annual Holocaust Remembrance Day Commemoration.

6:30 p.m. Pre-program Recitation of Names: *Unto Every Person There is a Name*

7:00 p.m. Community-wide Commemoration Service

Masks encouraged.

Free and open to the public but registration is required.

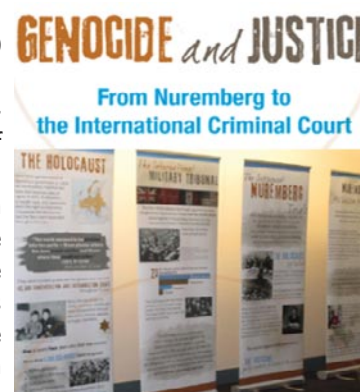
Livestream details TBA.

Genocide and Justice: From Nuremberg to the International Criminal Court

An exhibit at Mount Zion in partnership with
World Without Genocide

March 20 to April 16

This exhibit is comprised of 20 standing banners, each 7' tall and 3' wide, which highlight 20th-century genocides, trials of accused perpetrators, and 'upstanders,' courageous men and women who challenged the global legal system to promote human rights. The exhibit gives information about the Holocaust and the genocides in Cambodia, Rwanda, former Yugoslavia, and Darfur, the first genocide of the 21st century.



Dr. Ellen Kennedy, Executive Director of World Without Genocide, will speak about this exhibit on Sunday, April 16, 11 am. In a time such as this, we encourage you to join and be in community as we reflect on our past and our responsibilities.

Passover

The First Seder of Passover is Wednesday night, April 5 / 15 Nisan

Passover ends at sunset on Wednesday, April 12 / 21 Nisan

(According to the Torah, in Israel, and in the Reform Movement, Passover is 7 days)

Congregational Passover Seder

Wednesday, April 5, 6:00 p.m.

Led by Rabbi Adler and Cantor Strauss-Klein

Join us in a communal celebration of Passover. A sumptuous Passover feast will be served!

Details to come.



Wishing You a Happy Passover!

Get recipes, blessings, family activities, & more...

ReformJudaism.org
Jewish Life in Your Life

Festival Morning Services

Intimate community for **song**.

Intimate community for **solace**.

Intimate community for **memory**.

Intimate community for **celebration**.

Intimate community for **being on your own**
but knowing you are part of something eternal.

Engage the mitzvah.

Try our Festival Morning services at 10 am for Passover/Pesach in person and online.

1st Day Festival Service

Thursday, April 6, 10:00 a.m.

7th Day Festival Service (including Yizkor Prayers)

Wednesday, April 12, 10:00 a.m.

The 7th day of Pesach features the commemoration of crossing the Red Sea which is the Torah portion that will be chanted.

Yizkor prayers are traditionally said four times a year in memory of a deceased parent(s): Yom Kippur, Sh'mini Atzeret (8th day of Sukkot), Passover (7th day), and Shavuot. Even if you have not attended in the past, it is a meaningful opportunity to remember.

צדק צדק תרדף **JEWISH COMMUNITY ACTION**
JUSTICE, JUSTICE SHALL YOU PURSUE

Jewish Community Action presents
21st Annual Freedom Seder
Sunday, March 26, 4:00-6:00 pm | Online

Join us for an afternoon of community and solidarity at this year's virtual Jewish Community Action Freedom Seder! Bring your family and friends along to celebrate Passover and connect it to current movements for social justice. Together, we'll stand in mutual support with people of all backgrounds, traditions, races, religions, genders, and zip codes. Plus, this event will be accessible to all, with closed captioning and ASL interpretation. All donations support JCA's progressive, Jewish organizing for racial and economic liberation in Minnesota.

Register at: tinyurl.com/freedom-seder23.

THANK YOU...FOR YOUR CONTRIBUTIONS

RABBIS' DISCRETIONARY FUND

In honor of:
Rabbi Adam Stock Spilker
Susan Summit
Mavis Goldstein
Rita Grossman
Don Novak
Rita Grossman
Larry Solomon
Rita Grossman
 In appreciation of:
Rabbi Adam Stock Spilker
Mikhail M. Shvartsman
Terri Steinberg
Rabbi Esther Adler
Judi & Todd Marshall
Rabbi Spilker & Rabbi Adler
John Mast
 In memory of:
Harvey Bream
Don & Rhoda Mains
Irvine Bucher
Marilyn Silver
Helen Ginsburg
Ida Ellis
Bernard Nardie Stein
Sally Stein & Jane Kerr
Captain Richard Chorlins
Raymond & Rosemary Sevett
Barbara Melamed
Audrey G Cohen
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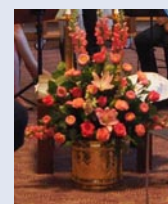
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Update on Jewish Effective Giving Initiative

Stephanie Wolkin and Janet Kampf,
Co-chairs, Mount Zion's Jewish Effective Giving Initiative

When Mount Zion joined the World Union for Progressive Judaism's Effective Giving Initiative, we knew we would be starting small. But our congregants rose to the occasion, and, in our 2022 Yom Kippur appeal, we raised \$3,500 for Helen Keller International. Thanks to all who contributed.

Helen Keller International provides vitamins and other nutrients to build immunity and minimize vision loss for those in 20 countries and five US states who might not otherwise have access to health care. With Mount Zion's funds joining donations from 30 Reform congregations throughout the United States, we made an important contribution toward saving the sight and nutritional health of so many people.

"Progressive Judaism inspires us to carry out tikkun olam, our concrete action to make the world better and repair its injustices," says Rabbi Sergio Bergman, president of the WUPJ. "With this call we not only do what the heart dictates in values, but also do it effectively to be efficient and responsible for saving a life."

Look for another opportunity to support Jewish Effective Giving as part of the 2023 Yom Kippur appeal.



The Jewish
Effective Giving
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Jacob's Wrestling to Become Israel

In Genesis chapter 32, Jacob wrestles with a ? (is it a man, an angel, or God?) and is renamed Israel, literally, “one who wrestles with God.” This is a formative text of our identity.

A group of Mount Zion members [who meet on Thursdays](#) at noon with Rabbi Spilker – all are welcome! (online weekly and once-a-month in person) – has spent the past year reading this chapter. Here are their reflections:

Jean King Appelbaum

I assume that the Torah is not the word of God dictated at Sinai, but, rather, the written record of what was once an oral text. At some point people wrote the content that eventually became what we study. In so

doing, they chose to use the Hebrew word *ish* (man) to identify the being with whom Jacob wrestled. Ignoring the possible reasons for Jacob's ending up entirely alone on one side of the Jabbok and an explanation for where, exactly, this *ish* came from to confront him, it strikes me that the ambiguity of the word is exactly the point of the story. The redactors could have explicitly identified the “man” as, alternately, (1) a representative of God—a celestial messenger with a specific purpose, or (2) perhaps Esau's guardian angel sent to eke revenge for his stolen birth right, or (3) an apparition—Jacob's long dormant, but newly awakened conscience. But if they had been explicit, the multiple possibilities of what might have taken place as Jacob became Israel, i.e., the productive “wrestling” with text we engaged in during our Rashi discussions, would not have occurred, and our appreciation of this story's potential would have been diminished.

Stuart Appelbaum

I read Jacob's encounter with the *ish* (“man”) as an allegory concerning the consequences of failing to acknowledge and atone for the wrongs we have inflicted on others – in Jacob's case, willfully deceiving those he loved and stealing from them. In my reading, Jacob's sins have festered for 20 years, and the man with whom he is wrestling is himself – against his own demons. A series of dreams prepares Jacob for the ultimate reckoning with his past.

In Gen. 28, v12-18, Jacob dreams of a ladder to heaven with angels ascending and descending. In the dream, God addresses Jacob directly, promising that his descendants shall be “as the dust of the earth....”

Jacob awakens with a revelation (v16) “...surely God is in this place and I did not know it!” In Gen. 31, Jacob relates to Rachel and Leah another dream in which God tells Jacob to leave Laban and return to the land of his birth. And finally, in Gen. 32, in what I glean is a liminal state between dream and wake-

fulness, Jacob at last confronts his past in the shape of a man. In the ensuing, violent struggle, Jacob injures himself writhing on the ground. But the long-delayed confrontation then enables him to fulfill God's prophecy.

In my reading, Jacob's immersion in a fitful, tortured self-examination and resulting injury is his necessary atonement, *t'shuvah*, for his earlier sins. He has now earned the right to become Israel, our progenitor; his best self, with the text closing “And the sun rose upon him...”

ChatGBT

In the Biblical story of Jacob, he is described as wrestling with an unknown figure, referred to as a “man” in Genesis 32:24. This encounter takes place at a ford of the Jabbok River, where Jacob is on his way to meet his estranged brother Esau. The “man” with whom Jacob wrestles is later identified as an angel or a manifestation of God.

The wrestling match between Jacob and the “man” is seen by many as a symbolic representation of Jacob's inner struggles and personal growth. The wrestling match is not just a physical battle, but also a spiri-

tual one. Jacob is said to have held on to the “man” even after being injured, refusing to let go until he is blessed. This determination and persistence is seen as a reflection of Jacob's willingness to change and become a better person.

The encounter also serves as a turning point in Jacob's life. After the wrestling match, Jacob's name is changed to Israel, which means “he who struggles with God.” This change in name is symbolic of the trans-

Bereishit/Genesis, Chapter 32, verses 25-31

וַיִּנָּתֶר יַעֲקֹב לִבְדּוֹ וַיִּצְבֹּק אִישׁ עִמּוֹ עַד עֲלוֹת הַשָּׁחַר:

Jacob was left alone. And a figure (Hebrew “*ish*”) wrestled with him until the break of dawn.

וַיֵּרָא כִּי לֹא יָכֹל לָוּ וַיִּגַע בְּכַף-יָרְכוֹ וַתִּקַּע כַּף-יָרְכוֹ יַעֲקֹב בְּהֶאֱבָקוֹ עִמּוֹ:

When he saw that he had not prevailed against him, he wrenched Jacob's hip at its socket, so that the socket of his hip was strained as he wrestled with him.

וַיֹּאמֶר שְׁלֹחֲנִי כִּי עָלָה הַשָּׁחַר וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא אֲשַׁלְחֶנּוּ כִּי אִם-בֵּרַכְתָּנִי:

Then he said, “Let me go, for dawn is breaking.” But he answered, “I will not let you go, unless you bless me.”

וַיֹּאמֶר אֵלָיו מַה-שְּׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר יַעֲקֹב:

Said the other, “What is your name?” He replied, “Jacob.”

וַיֹּאמֶר לֹא יַעֲקֹב עוֹד שְׁמֶךָ כִּי אִם-יִשְׂרָאֵל כִּי-שָׁרִית עַם-אֱלֹהִים וְעַם-אָדָמָה וַתִּנָּקֶל:

Said he, “Your name shall no longer be Jacob, but Israel, for you have striven with beings divine and human, and have prevailed.”

וַיִּשְׁאַל יַעֲקֹב וַיֹּאמֶר הִגִּידָה-נָא שְׁמֶךָ וַיֹּאמֶר לָמָּה זֶה תִּשְׁאַל לְשְׁמִי וַיִּבְרָךְ אֹתוֹ שָׁם:

Jacob asked, “Pray tell me your name.” But he said, “You must not ask my name!” And he took leave of him there.

וַיִּקְרָא יַעֲקֹב שֵׁם הַמָּקוֹם פְּנִיָּאל כִּי-רָאִיתִי אֱלֹהִים פָּנִים אֶל-פָּנִים וַתִּנָּצֵל נַפְשִׁי:

So Jacob named the place Peniel, meaning, “I have seen a divine being face to face, yet my life has been preserved.”

formation that has occurred in Jacob, as he has come to understand the power and presence of God in his life.

In conclusion, the story of Jacob wrestling with the “man” is a powerful and meaningful tale that highlights the importance of personal growth and the power of faith. The encounter serves as a reminder that we all have struggles in life, but through determination and perseverance, we can overcome them and become the best versions of ourselves.

Jonathan Eisenthal - Jacob binds himself to Jewish history

With whom does Jacob wrestle? Rashi answers, “Our Rabbis of blessed memory explain that ‘he’ is the ministering angel of Esau.”

Who? First, we must know that Rashi is quoting a text called *Bereishit Rabbah*, written between 300-500 of the Common Era, which coincides with the Christianization of the Roman Empire. In *Bereishit Rabbah*, ‘*Saru she Esav*’ – the ministering angel of Esau represents both Rome, and the Christian Church.

In Jacob’s dark night of the soul, he foresees the rise of the Christian Church and how it will persecute the Jewish people. Instead of renouncing his identity, walking away from the troubles that he foresees for himself and his descendants, Jacob holds on until dawn breaks. He chooses engagement with history. When *Saru shel Esav* wounds Jacob’s thigh, even this does not dissuade him. To the rabbis of *Bereishit Rabbah* this wound refers to the ‘generation of the *Shemad*’—Akiva and the other martyrs to Roman persecution. Even though Jacob foresees this terrible fate, he will not let go. Judaism that exists today, as an identity and a faith and a body of knowledge, is a legacy of this decision to never let go.

David Geddes

God could have created a perfect world with flawless humans, but did not. Why? Humans would have had no ownership of their world. God wanted partnership with humans in *tikkun olam*, with humans using free will, creativity, and a divine spark to move the world incrementally towards the messianic age. Likewise, Jacob was imperfect—he had lied, cheated, manipulated, stolen, and deceived—leaving him spiritually unprepared to lead the Israelites. Jacob’s first spiritual moment occurred at night, alone, when he experienced the *sulam*, a two-way connection between his own divine spark and God. Subsequently, Jacob was left “actively isolated” in the dark across the Jabbok when an *ישׂא* accosted and wrestled with Jacob. While Jacob identified the *ישׂא* as God, the *ישׂא* was Jacob’s divine spark, Jacob’s built-in internal connection with God. God created circumstances in which God and Jacob could work in partnership to transform Jacob’s soul. Jacob could never have undertaken this daunting task due to fear. God would never have undertaken the process alone, depriving Jacob of ownership. Instead, Jacob emerged with new name and new soul-traits, ready to be a patriarch of b’nei Israel. The *ישׂא* was God as the core of the human soul.

Phil Goldman

Try as we might, we will never know who the *ish* (literally, man) is that Jacob wrestled with. And that’s just the point. We know who the usual suspects would be – perhaps an angel, or Esau, or even Jacob himself. Though at best we can only rely on what minimal clues we can glean from a story that is itself based on myth, which in turn has been rung through the ringer of multiple translations and commentators, each with their own perspectives, opinions, and often agendas. Hardly a way to arrive at a consensus or convincing answer. But a wonderful way to try.

While we can debate who the author(s) of this story might be, Joseph Campbell tells us that myths are often created out of primary human experience with the inexplicable – or in this case, the *ish*.

Yet Judaism is often based on questioning even the inexplicable. The teachings of Talmud often begin with a question. We study Rashi by asking ourselves “what’s bothering Rashi?”. And every Pesach, as we gather together, we read the four questions posed by different types of children.

But there is a reason why our questions often have no answer. Elie Wiesel teaches us that every question possesses a power that is lost in the answer. He also teaches us that questions unite people, while answers divide them. Though it is likely that we will each arrive at a different understanding of this text, it is the common question itself that unites our study group. It is the reason we study best through dialogue, and learning from each other.

And as with the four children, it seems that Jacob’s experience with an inexplicable *ish* provides yet another question that we ask ourselves to this day – not only who was the *ish*, but also what does this all mean for us? We do so knowing yet again that we will never find the answer, yet we are not free to desist, and that it is by simply asking the question that we will learn Torah, and that alone will be our reward. The Talmud teaches us that when we arrive in heaven G-d will pose to us yet another question – “Did you set aside time for learning Torah?” That will be the only answer we know for sure. Once and for all.

Jules Goldstein

In the narrative, Jacob is at a point of transition. He is transitioning between the land of Aram, the land of his mother’s birth, and the land of Canaan, the land of his father’s birth. He is transitioning between confrontations with Laban, whose name means white and with Edom, whose name means red. He is transitioning between being a servant and being the head of a family. He is between two camps. He needs to transition within himself. Perhaps, his wrestling is with himself in realization that he can no longer be Jacob, he who grabs heels, but must become Israel, he who, with the Lord, prevails.

Janet Kampf

I do not know who Jacob is wrestling with when he sustains an injury and then receives the name of Israel. I do know that I am wrestling with my opinion of Jacob. From the beginning of his life in the womb he grabs Esau’s heel in order to gain an advantage. He is deceitful with his father to gain a blessing and robs his brother of his rightful inheritance. He accepts Leah as his wife without question and manipulates the herds to his advantage. When he reunites with Esau it is another false relationship. Jacob is not to be trusted or admired. I would not welcome him to my home or want to engage with him in any way. I would invite his children to my Seder.

Steve Levin

Genesis 32:25 tells us that Jacob spent an entire night alone, on the eve of a climactic confrontation with Esau, wrestling with an *ish*. Who—and what—was this *ish*?

The most satisfying answer for me lies in depth psychology. Jacob is engaged in multiple inner conflicts—hope versus despair (will he survive tomorrow?), courage versus fear (can he summon his faculties and face his brother as an equal?), diplomacy versus weaponry (can he make peace, or must he fight?). An even greater conflict persists between his conscience and his deepest instincts—what might be called his “daemon”, an inborn gift and essence growing stronger in his soul. His conscience knows, and regrets, that he conned Esau and fooled Isaac to gain the Abrahamic birthright. But his daemon believes his misdeeds were what God intended all along. Jacob intuitively he is better equipped than Esau to practice, preserve, and promote Abraham’s and Isaac’s covenant with God.

The *ish* who Jacob wrestled was his daemon in conflict with his conscience, rationality, and survival instinct. By tirelessly wrestling, he integrated his daemon with the rest of his soul, leveraging all the past challenges and tests that God had placed before him.

John Mast

On Jacob's sojourn back to Canaan during one of his overnight dreams he encounters a man wrestling with him until the breaking of the day. This reference in the Torah text specifically states the struggle was with *ish* Hebrew for "man" not "angel". The reference corresponds to the prophecy of Hosea. Interpretive arguments could go either way but for brevity's sake I will be a commentator on the *breishit*/genesis narrative.

Perhaps what Jacob is internally struggling with is the blessing he received from his father Isaac through Jacob's deception. Jacob's subconscious, augmented by the dream emerging by his victory, helped him overcome any doubts of him becoming a man well deserved to live the blessing of his father Isaac in leading the Jewish nation to be great for all time as our great legacy has endured throughout the ages.

Sophia Peterson

To me, a pretty simple yet beautiful reading is that Yaakov was "wrestling" with HaShem (via his physical struggle with the angel, the *ish*, being an extension of the will of HaShem) evidenced by his choice of the name "Peniel" and the words of the *ish*, "you have struggled with God and man." When the angel asks his name, it's asking Yaakov who he is, what he represents. Yaakov answers with his old name. But through wrestling he's grown, and he is given his new one. The outcome is that Yaakov obtains a new blessing and new identity through intimate engagement with the divine, rather than deceit and trickery as he'd done previously at the direction of his mother. In the past, Yaakov had tried to take his elder brother's place and blessing and he anticipates facing the consequences upon their reunion. Lying directly to the face of their father, he said "I am Esav (Esau)." Now, he's wrestled with HaShem "face to face," earning a new identity by and for himself. Through this he becomes worthy to take on a new role, Yisrael. This time, he earns the blessing for himself through naked, honest struggle, emerging altered, injured and whole.

Andy Rapoport

He wrestled with everything. Nothing easy except Rachel's smile.
In the womb he wrestled.

When born, he strove for position.

He strove for stuff, the stuff of others, for what wasn't his.

His brother's birthright, his brother's blessing.

He bargained blessings with his God and daughters and livestock with his uncle.

He received no gifts, but he bargained well with divine help and usually got the better
until the bill came due.

And when he came home for his father's land, his claim over his brother, his debt to his brother

And alone at night with all his past catching up with him
with his angel or his brother's angel or his own striving,

He didn't wrestle for his own soul for it was his soul to wrestle.

For one more blessing, that could be truly and fairly earned.

And he got a limp and another name

That fit and didn't fit as he tried to walk it off.

He could not rest, he could only wrestle.

He had four wives and he loved only one.

He had twelve sons and a daughter, and he loved only one.

But he claimed two grandsons, knowing wrong from right, left from right.

Kathleen Riley

I do not know. It might have been a man, or an angel messenger of God, or an angel messenger of Esau his brother, or even his own conscience. Whomever it was, I don't find that Jacob learned any lesson from it. He remained demanding of absolution, and boasting that he had seen God face to face. And a few verses later, after a moving reunion with Esau, in which Esau forgives him, he lies to his brother again. Telling Esau he will meet him at one place but then moving to another. After all of this he is blessed by God and called Israel, a second time.

So what am I to learn from this? That I will earn a blessing even after a life of lies and deceit? Even if I continue on that path. That despicable behavior will be rewarded? Maybe. Or maybe I am supposed to learn that it is the struggle that is important. The fight to understand. That I must not walk away from that struggle. That even though I do not understand everything, I may be on a path that might lead me to that understanding. And the critical piece is staying in the fight. Even if I wander off again, even if I repeat my mistakes. I can come back and try again.

Jon Strauss - WrestleMania 2023 B.C.E. – 2023 C.E.

We Israelites take pride that one of our main attributes is found in our name: a people who wrestle with God. We question authority and each other, as represented by the great debates found on each page of the Talmud. Progressive Judaism was born out of this wrestling and every time we transcend tradition, we remind ourselves this boundary-pushing literally defines us.

But why focus only on wrestling with God? That's only half of our name. After the close of the epic, all-night wrestling match, the *ish* asks for his opponent's name, and, after Jacob says "Jacob," the mysterious stranger informs him that he will now be known as "Israel, for you have striven with the Divine and with men and you have overcome."

- Genesis 32:29.

Why is our people's striving with men so rarely mentioned? We celebrate grappling with God, but we seem to disregard that we also wrestle with men. Rashi briefly notes that the "men" are "Esau and Laban," Jacob's nemeses, and the progenitor of destroyers of Jerusalem (Esau = Edom = Rome). This reminds us that we ignore the Essaus, Hitlers, Neo-Nazis, and Kanyes at our own peril. We must step bravely into those wrestling matches, fight until dawn breaks and overcome.

Dani Walden

Genesis 28 opens with Jacob being sent away from his only home, where his own brother has threatened to kill him. Quickly we have Jacob's dream where he encounters God. He calls this place Bethel, the House of God. Four chapters later, after wrestling with an *ish*, Jacob names another place Peniel, the Face of God. Understanding the trauma that takes us through the doorstep and up to the face of God is key to understanding who Jacob wrestles. Rashi says that Jacob crosses the river for—פכים קטנים—small jars. This too is key to understanding who this *ish* is. Often when Torah uses a deceptively simple word—place, man, face—there is too much to say with words. Jacob wrestles a man, yes. That man is a man, an angel, Esau's angel, the face of God. The answer is all of these in their own way. Most people will not have to face a fight like this nor even know what this fight is. Some will, will fail, and will end up shattered people. Others, like Jacob, will face this fight, will be broken, but in succeeding, they will finally be whole.

Imagining Mount Zion's Future

Future Fair & Town Hall Gatherings

- Envision the future: What do YOU want Mount Zion to look like?!
- Wrestle with really BIG ideas!
- Respond to a draft vision and strategic plan for Mount Zion that has been shaped by the Kivvun Task Force over the past 15 months.
- Create art that captures your hopes for Mount Zion and our community!
- Enjoy snacks and beverages with your friends!

For the past 15 months a group of 35 Mount Zion volunteers (called the Kivvun La'Atid Task Force) has been developing ideas for shaping our congregation's future. We've been looking at demographics and trends, exploring the experiences of members and non-members, exploring what we love about our congregation and what we wish we could do differently.

Now it is time to set our direction and commit to a path as we prepare to adopt a new Strategic Plan. The Board will vote on this in May. We have drafted a new vision statement, described a general path towards the vision, and selected some key priority directions for the coming years.

We invite you to talk with us about our proposals and offer your feedback and priorities. Your opinion matters and your voice is important; please share them with us at one or both of these interactive congregational meetings.

**All congregants are invited to either or both events
at Mount Zion in Margolis Hall.**

Tuesday, March 14, 7:00 – 9:00 pm

Sunday, March 19, 10:00 am - 12:00 pm

If you cannot attend either of these events, you will also be able to submit your ideas and comments in written form. We are working on that option and will provide more information soon!

MaZAL

Anshei Mitzvah is back!

Anshei Mitzvah is an opportunity for adults who never became Bar or Bat Mitzvah to deepen their knowledge of Judaism and to mark their personal commitment to it. Bar/Bat Mitzvah literally means Child of the Covenant; Anshei Mitzvah means "Persons of the covenant." The Anshei Mitzvah program involves a two year course of study leading to the Anshei Mitzvah class leading a service including chanting Torah and delivering a brief D'var Torah. If you are interested in beginning your study this Fall towards an Anshei Mitzvah service in Spring of 2025, please contact Rabbi Adler at eadler@mzion.org. (Check out the photos of previous Anshei Mitzvah classes in the Religious School Hallway!)

ENGAGE! 2023

A morning of Jewish learning.

Presented by the Minnesota JCC and
Hineni: Talmud Torah of St. Paul

Sunday, March 26

In-Person 10 am-1:30 pm | Zoom 7-8 pm

\$30 in advance | \$36 at the door | Free for ages 30 and under

Mount Zion Temple is a Community Partner for this event.

Rabbi Adler will teach

Shir HaShirim: Symbol or Sensual?

Sunday, March 26, 11:30 am - 12:30 pm

The scroll assigned to Passover is Shir HaShirim (Song of Songs). We will study several passages in three different translations which represent vastly different ways of understanding Shir HaShirim, from religious to racy.



Mount Zion Israel Book Group Spring Event The Yom HaShoah/Israel Connection Sunday, April 16, 10 am

Join the Mount Zion Israel Book Group for a conversation with Israeli author Dr. Nir Kaftan, discussing his book, *The Blue Ball*. We are meeting in person and speaking with Kaftan live from Israel via Zoom.

In his semi-autobiographical novel, Kaftan explores the connection between The Shoah and the building of the state of Israel, through the tale of displacement, alienation and redemption of a young man who leaves Europe and comes to Israel to begin a new life. In the next generation, a complete stranger experiences a different and yet similar alienation when circumstances leave him ill-adapted for life in the still-young Jewish state. Is there a secret these two persons share? Can one really turn his back to the past?

The Blue Ball is not available in English, but Kaftan and his friend, Andy Greenfeld, a Woodbury resident, have **translated two key chapters of the novel, and make it available through the Mount Zion Israel Book Group**. If you are interested in reading these selections, either in electronic or printed format, contact Jonathan Eisenthal at johnnyirondale@gmail.com. Or text to 651-260-6263. And please RSVP for the event, so that we know how much rugelach and halvah to have ready!

Young Adult Engagement

Purim (March 6): We're having a special 20s/30s gathering at 6pm, then join the congregation for an intergenerational text study, spirited service and Megillah reading, and Latke/Hamantaschen Debate!

TRAYF at Six Points Theater (March 9): Join us at the theater! Subsidized tickets are \$15.

Lag B'Omer Bonfire (May 8): Join us on the Mount Zion patio for an opportunity to connect with 20s/30s in the community.



Young adults socialized over mocktails and cocktails at our congregational Gefilteria event in December!

Women of Mount Zion Temple

Tour of Mount Zion Cemetery with Jules Goldstein

Sunday, April 23 at 1:00 pm



Jules will talk about the cemetery's history; the first cemetery on Front and Sylvan and how it saved the congregation. The need to move North. The offer that couldn't be refused. Two Rabbis and a Cantor – The lives and times of the three religious leaders buried in the cemetery. And more! Jules Goldstein is a Trustee of the Mount Zion Cemetery with a long standing interest in history. Previously, he has served the congregation as Secretary, Board Member and Adult Education Chair and the community as president of both Jewish Family Service and the United Jewish Fund and Council.



Part of the series **Understanding the End of Life Process from a Jewish Perspective** presented by the Women of Mount Zion Temple. Open to Everyone!

Join in singing “The Hope/Hatikvah” in honor of Israel’s 75th!

Sunday, February 26, 9:30 am - 10:00 am

Mount Zion is joining with **ARZA (the Association for Reform Zionists of America)** in recording a video of all who choose to sing “Hatikvah,” Israel’s national anthem to celebrate Israel’s 75th birthday this April. Our video will be joined with many others across North America in a video compilation. These are challenging days in Israel for many reasons, but this video is about celebrating the ideals of Israel, the safety of the Jewish people, and the hope for the future.

All ages are welcome! We just ask the following:

- Please wear a blue or white shirt!
- You must arrive by 9:30 to participate (in the Sanctuary)!
- Practice! You can use the sheet music or the lyrics sheet to sing along with the guide track. Links to practice materials at mzion.org

We will have “cue cards” with the words written on them for the video-recording part, so you don’t need to memorize the words. If you have any questions, please be in touch with Cantor Strauss-Klein at jstraussklein@mzion.org. Thank you for considering this important gathering!



Religious School News



Our Shir Tzion choir practicing!



Religious School Tu BiSh'vat Seder!



Hanging out in Lipschultz Lounge on a Sunday morning is a great way to connect!

Save the Dates!

March

3/1 - Chai School Tri III Begins
3/5 - Purim Carnival
3/6 - Purim Service (evening)
3/19 - PreK/K Model Passover Seder

April

4/2-4/12 - Passover Break - No School
4/14-16 - Sacred Choices Gimmel (11th-12th Grade)
4/16 - 5th Grade Adult Meeting
4/19 - Yom HaShoah Observance
4/26 - Yom HaAtzmaut Observance
4/28 - Chai School Graduation, Senior Send-Off,
7th Grade Gemilut Chassadim Project



6th Grade Tallit Making Workshop



Youth Engagement News

Noar Tzion (3rd-5th grade)

Chocolate Seder (March 19): Join JYG for an annual favorite where we use chocolate and tasty treats to retell the Pesach story!

Summer Celebration (May 7): Join to celebrate a fun year of youth programming with summer treats, water play, and awesome games!

JYG (6th-8th grade)

Chocolate Seder (March 19): Join Noar Tzion for an annual favorite where we use chocolate and tasty treats to retell the Pesach story!

JYG Big Fun (April 30): Stay tuned for info about our closing event of the year!

SPORTY (9th-12th grade)

Purim Lock-In (March 3-4): Join SPORTY for a fun overnight with your favorite carnival activities, yummy food, and the best Jewish teens in town!

SPORTY Gone Cruisin' (May 13): We're going on a Mississippi river cruise! Stay tuned for details and registration.



Noar Tzion had so much fun making pizzas and painting!

SPORTY loved connecting over boba!



JYG had a blast roller skating!

B'nei Mitzvah

Ida Jo Chauss

April 22, 2023

Picture removed online.

Ida Jo Chauss (Hebrew name Tova Maya) is the daughter of Michael and Stephanie Chauss. Her grandparents are James and Elaine Sweet, Judith and Allan Strauss, Judith Chauss z"l and Bernie and Barbara Chauss. Ida is a 7th grader at Woodbury Middle

School where her favorite classes are Math and Language Arts. She loves the sport of swimming and is a member of the Woodbury High School Swim Team and SEMS Swim Club. Ida also enjoys reading, art and spending time with family and friends. Ida's mitzvah project is planning and providing all of the materials for a library cart with Jewish Books for the Early Childhood Program of the MN JCC. Ida will be donating a portion of her Bat Mitzvah gift money to the JCC Early Childhood Program.

Talia Gore

April 29, 2023

Picture removed online.

Talia Daniela Fischman Gore is the daughter of Tracy Fischman and Paul Gore. She has a younger brother, Jacob. She was lucky to get special years with all grandparents – Kenneth Fischman, Natalie Fischman, and Ki Ki and

Warren Gore – before they passed away. Talia is a seventh-grader at Hidden River Middle School in St. Paul. Talia loves ultimate frisbee, dogs, singing, and hanging with her close friends and family. Talia is also a member of her school's debate team. Talia will donate a portion of her bat mitzvah gift money to St. Paul-based Hallie Q. Brown Center, which provides an array of social services, fosters and promotes personal growth, and builds community leadership.

Brotherhood

Cruising: Stories, Tips and Tricks from a Seasoned Traveler

Sunday, March 12, 10:30 am - 12pm at Mount Zion

*Jewish Family Service of St. Paul (JFS) and MZ Brotherhood event
Free and open to all.*

JFS and the Mount Zion Brotherhood invite all who identify as men to this brunch and discussion with **Alex Locke, Director of Aging and Disability Services at JFS**. Alex loves taking cruises. His degree in broadcast journalism and sparkling personality makes him a fun, engaging presenter.



This event will be the kickoff of a new series "Next Chapter for Men", designed to help men re-imagine new possibilities for the future and take the first steps in moving forward.

RSVP your attendance to JFS Community Programs Coordinator Anne Myers at amyers@jfssp.org or call (651) 359-7775.

Social Action Update

Tzedek = Justice

Justice! Justice!

Tzedek Committee continues its pursuit of justice, focusing on racial justice, climate justice and the work of welcoming refugees and asylum seekers.

Racial justice continues to be at the forefront of our Tzedek efforts. The work we have done in support of reparations for descendants of chattel slavery continues to develop. This past year, our co-chair, Vic Rosenthal, served on the St. Paul Legislative Advisory Commission on Reparations for Descendants of Chattel Slavery. On January 4, 2023, the Saint Paul City Council created a permanent advisory body, *The Saint Paul Recovery Act Community Reparations Commission*. This is an exciting development as Saint Paul takes the lead nationally in addressing the wrongs of slavery and the necessity of repair. In addition, the City of St. Paul has created the Inheritance Fund as part of reparations to improve housing for individuals directly impacted by the construction of I-94 through the Rondo neighborhood. Mount Zion members are invited to join with Jewish Community Action and other organizations in support of this historic initiative in St. Paul. For more information, contact Vic Rosenthal on the Tzedek committee, vic.rosenthal@gmail.com.

On-going education

Honoring Martin Luther King Jr and the legacy of Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel this winter, we sponsored a congregational book read and discussion of Tiya Miles' *All That She Carried* in order to promote meaningful conversations and reflections on the legacy of slavery in the United States. **This Spring, we will be reading *The Sum of Us* by Heather McGhee.**



Mount Zion committee members are also working to put together a list of recommended reads. Here are a few suggestions:

You'll Never Believe What Happened to Lacey: Crazy Stories about Racism, by Amber Ruffin and Lacey LaMar

This humorous and educational book is written as a series of sisterly conversations discussing ridiculous but very real experiences of racism. Amber Ruffin is a comedian, writer, and host of *The Amber Ruffin Show* on NBC. Lacey Lamar is Amber's older sister and a human resources professional living in her home state of Nebraska. The book is contemporary, relatable, and laugh-out-loud funny. Their experiences are so common and told with such humor that we can realize how subtly racist we actually are. It is easier to – hopefully – become more aware of how what we do and say may be racist.

- Janice Goldstein

The Cooking Gene, by Michael Twitty

An intersection of personal and cultural history, told through the food traditions of the American South and its African origins—Michael Twitty's fearless pursuit of his roots through both his enslaved and enslaving ancestors, and how he finds threads of his African roots emerging in present life gave me more respect and new knowledge of the breadth of African-American experience. Plus, he's Jewish. And there are recipes!

- Siana Goodwin

The Hidden Wound, by Wendell Berry

Reading *The Hidden Wound* was a powerful experience for me because it highlighted the negative effects of racism on American whites (like me) and forced me to think about my role in unintentionally sustaining an existing oppressive system. The book is Berry's extended essay (hence a short book) about the effects of the "hidden wound" of racism on the identity of our country. He uses stories from his personal upbringing—his close relationships with two African-Americans who worked on his family's farm—to highlight the negative effects of racism on American Whites. It is beautifully written and compelling.

- Jean King Appelbaum

Climate Action Fair

Save the date: Sunday, April 16

Sponsored by Mount Zion's Climate Action Group and Tzedek Committee. The fair will offer conversations and resources to encourage active response to the climate crisis. We will learn about clean energy alternatives, pollinator support, plastic use reduction, composting, and policy action. If you have ideas and resources you'd like to share, please contact Climate Action Group Coordinator Siana Goodwin sgoodwin2@comcast.net.



Support for Refugees and Asylum-seekers

In keeping with our commitment on **immigration justice**, Mount Zion is sponsoring an asylum-seeking family. Mount Zion Tzedek Committee has partnered with Gloria Dei Lutheran Church to house and help support an asylee family. During the past year, Gloria Dei transformed a classroom in their church into an efficiency apartment and welcomed a family referred to them by a local agency.

Luis, Stephanie and their young son, Sebastian, arrived in Minnesota in June after an arduous journey from Peru. The family is navigating the legal process outlined under U.S. and International Humanitarian law and Gloria Dei has secured legal representation for them.

Our goal at Mount Zion is to help support the family and their day-to-day needs. We are especially requesting Target gift cards so that the family can purchase food and household items.

Mount Zion is also partnering with an interfaith coalition known as Asylum Coalition for Transition – Twin Cities (ACT-TC). This group has been supporting asylum seekers in the Western Suburbs and is expanding to help support a family in Saint Paul. ACT-TC is hoping for volunteers from MZ to assist a new asylum-seeking family as they settle into life in Saint Paul. Help will be needed in navigating the health care system, enrolling children in school, finding legal services, and help with acquiring basic household items. More specific information on volunteer opportunities will be forthcoming. Any questions or requests to volunteer can be directed to Mark Joffe at marksjoffe@gmail.com.

Tzedek committee welcomes all congregants to join us in these efforts!

Diana Dean and Vic Rosenthal, *Tzedek Committee Co-chairs*

Rabbi Adam Stock Spilker
 Rabbi Esther Adler
 Cantor Jennifer Strauss-Klein
 Cantor Rachel Stock Spilker
 Shai Avny, Executive Director
 Susan Amram Summit, Religious School Director
 Abby Gore, Youth and Young Adult Engagement Associate
 Michael Wall, President
 Amy Schwartz Moore, President-Elect

Teresa Matzek, *Iton Tziyon*, editor
 tmatzek@mzion.org
 Website: www.mzion.org

YOM MAASIM TOVIM

A Hands-On, All-Ages Mitzvah Day at Neighborhood House Sunday, May 7, 9:30 am – 12:15 pm

In our vision, a core principle is *Gemilut Chasadim*: Acts of Loving Kindness. This is a day to put our vision into action together!

See p. 7 for details.



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PURIM at Mount Zion: The Best Jewish Holiday for All Ages!

Purim commemorates the story of Esther, who rescued the Jews of ancient Persia (now Iran) from persecution. Traditions include dressing in costume and eating hamantaschen (triangular stuffed pastries). It is our Spring time (!) chance for some fun!



Mama Mia Megillah Shpiel and Silly Service and Purim Carnival!

Sunday, March 5, 10:00 am - 1:00 pm

Adult Purim Extravaganza Monday, March 6, 6:00 pm

See p. 6 for details.